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FM AMCONSUL LAGOS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8929  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA PRIORITY 8743  
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY 0037  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 1254  
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY 0363  
RUEHVB/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB PRIORITY 0035  
RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ PRIORITY 0342  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 0341  
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO PRIORITY 0335  
RULSDMK/DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAHL/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH AFB UK PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000355

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STATE FOR AF/W, INR/AA, DS/IP/AF, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/OSAC,  
CA/OCS/ACS/AF FOR MESARITI  
ZAGREB FOR AMBASSADOR BRADTKE  
WARSAW FOR LISA PIASCIK  
CIUDAD JUAREZ FOR DONNA BLAIR  
OSLO FOR HELENA SCHRADER  
ISTANBUL FOR TASHAWNA SMITH  
SAO PAULO FOR ANDREW WITHERSPOON  
DOE FOR GPERSON, CAROLYN GAY  
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS, SRENENDER, DFIELD  
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS  
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR FLISER  
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD  
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART  
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT  
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER  
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/17/2017

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [EPET](#) [KDEM](#) [NI](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: SITREP 13: 5 AMCITS REMAIN HOSTAGES; GOVERNMENT  
OFFICIALS NEGOTIATING RELEASE

REF: A. LAGOS 331

[1](#)B. LAGOS 347

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Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Amciti John Stapleton, four Italians, and one Croatian remain hostages. Despite the May 16 attack on Bayelsa Governor Goodluck Jonathan's house, Chevron has decided not to alter its release plan. Secretary to the State Government Dr. Godknows Igali said he was actively pursuing all appropriate means of securing the hostages' release. Four American citizens begin their eighth day as hostages; Delta state Governor-elect Emmanuel Uduaghan told Global Industries (GI) on May 16 he was "working on the issue." End Summary.

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Bayelsa/Chevron: Variety of Negotiations;

¶2. (C) American citizen John Stapleton, four Italians and one Croatian remain hostages. During the May 17 crisis group meeting, Chevron said it sounded like Stapleton was reading prepared text on May 16 when he said they received the anti-malarial prophylaxes and prescription medications but not the welfare packages. Chevron said the call came from the same Thuraya Satellite phone used by Victor Ebikabowei on May 9 (Ref A). Chevron notified Stapleton's and the other hostages' families about the call. Chevron has prepared another package of malarial prophylaxes, medications, and family letters to be passed to the Bayelsa government.

¶3. (C) Chevron's May 16 meetings with Dr. Godknows Igali, Secretary to the Bayelsa State Government, and the Bayelsa

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Deputy Governor were cancelled after Vice President-elect Goodluck Jonathan's residence in Bayelsa was attacked. (Note: Our interlocutors said the house belonged to Jonathan's mother and was in a village outside Yenagoa. The Bayelsa government's preliminary investigations suggest agitated university students were responsible, but Jonathan's inner circle is awaiting a final report. Jonathan has moved out of Yenagoa. End Note.) Despite the attack, Chevron's release plan still calls for them to meet the hostages, once freed, at the Bayelsa Government house because the alternatives, either a night convoy to Warri or a night flight out of Yenagoa, are unsafe. Chevron representatives said they are logistically prepared for the hostages' release.

¶4. (C) Igali told Chevron the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) West, controlled by Tom Polo, is in conflict with MEND East, controlled by Commander Victor Ebikabowei. "Other elements" such as jailed militant leader Dokubo Asari and an individual called "SP" would like to see

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the groups merge. Given the competing militant groups, Igali said he was employing "orthodox and unorthodox" means to secure the hostages' release, such as using other militants to pressure Victor and asking traditional rulers to intervene, as well as carrying on typical negotiations. On May 17, Igali said discussions with other unspecified militant leaders ended with these leaders agreeing it was now time for Victor to release the hostages. Chevron representatives were wary Igali simply told them what they wanted to hear; nonetheless, they left the meeting with the impression that he is engaged and working towards the release.

¶5. (C) Igali expressed concern Commander Ebikabowei's recent raid on the Ezetu community near Ekeni and the May 16 attack on Governor Goodluck Jonathan's mother's house could complicate negotiations. (Ref B)

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Delta/GI: GI Met Government; Positive Outlook  
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¶6. (C) American citizens Kevin Faller, Christopher Gay, Michael Rousell and Larry Plake remain hostages after being abducted on May 8. On May 16, Global Industries (GI) representatives met Delta Governor-elect Emmanuel Uduaghan in Abuja. GI representatives also met Secretary to the State Government Ovie Omo-Agege and the Director of the State Security Service (SSS) in Warri. Uduaghan would not comment definitively on his role, but said he was "working on the issue." On May 17, GI told Regional Security Officer (RSO) they expected the situation to be resolved "soon" and were "extremely positive" following their meetings.

¶7. (C) GI is considering whether to send a representative to Warri to liaise directly with Delta State. Chevron has offered its facilities, transportation and security in Warri

or Asaba both for GI and once the hostages are released.

18. (C) GI said on May 17 its current release plan would use Chevron's transportation to move the four Amcits from Bayelsa to Lagos (housing them overnight in Bayelsa if necessary). They would stay overnight in Lagos, be seen by a medical doctor, and be debriefed before departing for Houston.  
BROWNE